

REMARKS

Responsive to the aforementioned office letter, the applicant has considered the restriction requirement and will concede for the purposes of this argument only, that the claims drawn to the process of making the shell sections and of making a pressure vessel can be considered to be distinct from Claims 1-16 drawn to the pressure vessel per se. However, it is respectfully urged that, at least with respect to the claims of Groups I and II, they actually constitute a single invention. In particular, it is to be noted that while the claims of Group II may have differing language from that of Group I, they are all actually drawn to the composite vessel. In other words, that composite vessel is going to have an inner shell section and an outer shell section which become integrally bonded together along with construction as identified in Claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully urged that the restriction requirement would not really advance the prosecution of the subject matter of this application.

The applicant has also added a new linking Claim 29 which clearly and unequivocally links the subject matter of the claims of Groups I and II. In effect, this new Claim 29 includes essentially all of the important limitations of both Claims 1 and 12. As a result, an examination of Claim 29 of the application inherently includes an examination of the claims of Groups I and II. In other words, a search would be duplicative and the efforts on the part of

the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office would also be duplicative by adherence to the restriction requirement between at least the claims of Groups I and II.

It is noteworthy that a similar claim could also be drawn to link the claims of Groups III and IV together as well. Inasmuch as the applicant is not electing to prosecute the claims of Groups III and IV, it is therefore urged that the claims of Groups I and II should, at very minimum, be prosecuted together in the present application.

In the event that the restriction requirement is not reformed, the applicant provisionally elects to prosecute the claims of Group I, including Claims 1-11 drawn to the pressure vessel with the joiner ring. However, the applicant does respectfully request reconsideration, at least between the claims of Groups I and II and would request that both groups of claims be examined together in this present application. It is also respectfully requested that new Claim 29 be grouped along with Claim 1 and examined with that group. Nevertheless and as indicated above, inasmuch as the Examiner is going to be forced to examine the claims of Group I and inherently the claims of Group II along with Claim 29, then it is urged that the claims of Groups I and II should be examined together.

With further respect to the restriction between the claims of Groups I and II, the applicant would also direct attention to the fact that Claim 8, for example, already includes limitations with

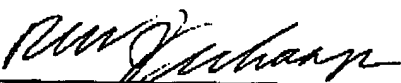
regard to the end fittings and the joinder ring. Inasmuch as the applicant has elected the claims of Group I, it is again urged that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office would be inherently examining the claims of Group II with the Claims 12-16 incorporated therein.

5 Thus and again, it is urged that the efforts on the part of both the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the applicant are only duplicated by adherence to the restriction between the claims of Groups I and II.

10 In view of the foregoing, the applicant respectfully requests examination of Claims 1-16 and 29 or, in the alternative, if the restriction requirement is not reformed, at least examination of Claims 1-11 and 29.

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15 Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted
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Sarah Thrift
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Date of Signature: July 1, 2004

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